

1978 ANNUAL REPORT
PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

Marie R. Keeney
Director

Dick Thornburgh
Governor

512 Finance Building
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PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

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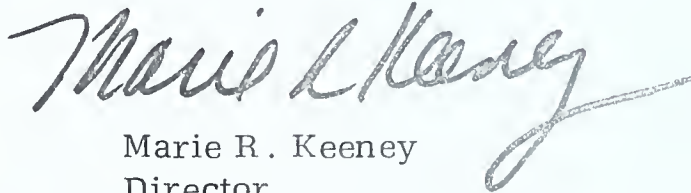
DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This Annual Report to the Governor and the people of Pennsylvania covers the activities and accomplishments of the Commission for Women during 1978.

As an agency affecting public policy, the Commission focussed its main attention in 1978 on introduction and passage of a package of bills to amend or repeal hundreds of Pennsylvania statutes which did not conform to the state Equal Rights Amendment. The E.R.A. implementation package substantially eliminated sex discriminatory language from the state laws, and clearly reiterated the intent of the legislature to treat all citizens equally under the law without regard to sex. This report provides details of the passage of 19 of the 26 bills in the E.R.A. package.

Other priority issues in 1978 were equal opportunity for girls in vocational education programs, divorce law reform, equal opportunity for girls in high school sports, and employment and training programs geared to women whose occupational skills were based on homemaking. Ways in which these issues were addressed are described in this report.

The Pennsylvania Commission for Women accomplishes its work through a small staff of five (one a part-time position), other staff funded through federal and other special project grants, a 21-member unpaid Advisory Board, and the cooperation and assistance of other state agencies and of women's organizations throughout Pennsylvania. Our thanks go to all those who worked with and assisted the Commission for Women in 1978.


Marie R. Keeney
Director

DIVORCE LAW REFORM

For several years, the Commission has been gathering information on the inequities in the Pennsylvania divorce law, and testimony in support of reform legislation was presented in two sessions of the General Assembly. No reform legislation, however, has been passed.

Since it appeared that a wide variety of women's organizations and other groups were deeply interested in divorce reform, the Commission called together representatives of 25 organizations to form a Task Force on Divorce Reform. This Task Force spent five months studying the current divorce law and various reform proposals. It met with representatives of other interested groups, and the head from the Wisconsin Commission on the Status of Women about the new Wisconsin divorce law. Lawyers and others on the panel who work with divorce situations described the impact of the current law on the economics, stability, and emotional health of the spouses and children involved.

In December, the Task Force reached agreement on four basic principles for divorce reform in Pennsylvania and established a drafting committee to work with members of the General Assembly to develop legislation for the 1979 session. The four basic principles are:

1. there must be equitable division of property which recognizes both the monetary and nonmonetary contributions of both spouses of the family economic unit;
2. there must be alimony for an economically dependent spouse, where appropriate, based on specific criteria of need;
3. there must be a new ground for divorce that eliminates the need to prove one spouse at fault and the other blameless;
4. there must be provisions for counseling in certain circumstances.

Task Force members agree to seek the endorsement of their organizations for these basic principles, and for specific divorce reform legislation in 1979. Represented on the Task Force were: American Association of University Women, Church Women United, Pennsylvania Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Junior League, Pennsylvania Legal Services Center, National Council of Negro Women, Pennsylvania of Marriage and Family Counselors, American Civil Liberties Union, Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Pennsylvania Federation of Women's Clubs, League of Women Voters, National Council of Jewish Women, National Organization for Women, Pennsylvania Home Economics Association, Soroptimists International, Women in Transition, Women's Committee

of the Philadelphia Bar Association, Women's Law Project, University Women's Center, Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Lancaster Women's Center. The Task Force was headed by Greta Aul, Counsel to the Commission for Women. It was set up as an internship project of Kathy Shovlin, a student at Penn State University.

E.R.A. AND OTHER LEGISLATION

The legislative priority of the Commission for Women in 1978 was the Equal Rights Amendment Implementation package. This package, sponsored by Representative Helen Wise, included 26 bills which were written to amend, revise, or repeal acts or sections of acts which contained sex-based discrimination in conflict with our 1971 Constitutional guarantee of equal rights regardless of sex. The bills were researched, drafted, and reviewed by a number of individuals and groups working with the Pennsylvania Commission for Women between June 1975 and December 1977. E.R.A. implementation was the major responsibility of Greta Aul, Counsel to the Commission, who directed the project from its inception.

Nineteen of the 26 bills became law in 1978. Those passed include an amendment which adds the language of the state E.R.A. to the general provisions governing the interpretations of all statutes. An amendment to the state's Human Relations Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in such public accommodations as restaurants, public facilities, and school sports programs also became law. Other new legislation in the E.R.A. package removed sex-based terminology from a variety of statutes dating back to 1705 and repealed obsolete laws that contained sex discrimination.

The Commission also supported strengthening amendments to the Protection from Abuse Act which were passed in 1978. The changes in the act make it easier for a victim of family violence to file a court complaint, and make provision for the court to order temporary support payments where appropriate.

INTERNATIONAL EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

The Commission was selected by the German Marshall Fund in August to host the first visit of a representative of a European Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. European countries have relatively new laws against sex discrimination in employment and guarantees of equal pay, and their new enforcement agencies have expressed an interest in benefitting from the American experience. The Pennsylvania Commission for Women was known to some of these as a result of our 1977 film, "Why Not A Woman?" having been translated for use in countries belonging to the European Common Market, and from meetings between the Director and the Common Market's Minister for Social Affairs.

A three month study tour was arranged by the Commission for Bente Petersen, a staff member of the Danish Council on Equality. Ms. Petersen visited state and federal equal employment agencies, women's advisory groups, demonstration job projects, women's advocacy groups, and others in Harrisburg, Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco during her tour.

PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR GIRLS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

One of the first findings of the Task Force on Vocational Education and Apprenticeship Training was that parents play a major role in either supporting or discouraging the participation of girls in nontraditional vocational education programs. The Task Force further learned that no guidance and counseling tools were available to help parents understand and appreciate the importance of all vocational programs for their daughters' futures. As a result of this information, the Commission applied for and was awarded a grant from the Women's Educational Equity Act, administered by the U.S. Office of Education, to produce counseling materials for parents of prospective vocational education students.

The project, "Parent Outlook Program," completed its work in 1978 with the production of a 17-minute color/sound motion picture, parent fact book, and teacher counselor guide, entitled "It's Her Future." The program depicts high school girls in various vocational education settings, including electronics, drafting, forestry, auto mechanics, appliance repair, and civil engineering. Parents, teachers, and student themselves are interviewed in the film about the opportunities for girls in nontraditional areas, both in school and in the job market. The people in the film also address some of the fears or stereotypes parents may have about nontraditional areas of training and work, and reveal how things have worked out for the real girls who ventured into these new areas.

"It's Her Future" will be available for nationwide distribution through a federal government network in 1979. It is designed for use by junior high and middle school guidance and counseling personnel, parent-teacher groups, women's and civil organizations, and public and commercial television.

Pittsburgh filmmaker Donna Tabor produced the film. Program management was provided by Marilyn Levin, who worked with an Advisory Board including representatives of the Department of Education, guidance counselors, parents, students, and vocational education teachers, headed by the Commission's Consultant and Education Equity, Dr. Norma Raffel.

PARTICIPATION ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AND COALITIONS

The Commission, as an agency representing women's needs and concerns, participates in several state boards and commissions. These include:

Public Health Trust: The Commission is one of six members, with the Attorney General, Secretary of Health, Secretary of Welfare, Executive Director of the Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, and the Counsel to the Governor, of a trust fund which has distributed revenues from a lawsuit to programs in the area of crime victims, lead poisoning, drug abuse, and sickle cell anemia. During 1978, the last of the funds were distributed, including grants to two women's shelters and one rape crisis program, and funds for training counselors to improve their services to women in drug and alcohol abuse rehabilitation programs.

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission Contract Compliance Advisory Board: Regulations concerning equal opportunity for the handicapped were a major topic in 1978.

Council On Sexual Minorities: State services to and treatment of gay women and men, such as state health services, were the primary area of concern.

State "Manpower" Services Council: The Commission continued to bring to the attention of this group the underrepresentation of women, particularly older women, in federal CETA training programs in Pennsylvania.

Governor's Youth Employment Advisory Council: Plans for funding programs to impact on youth unemployment were reviewed for inclusion of young women and minority youths.

Women's Legislative Exchange: The Commission is also one of the founding members of the Women's Legislative Exchange, a coalition of 18 women's organizations and groups with women's concerns founded in 1968. In 1978, the Commission participated in the monthly meetings of the Exchange to share information on legislation affecting women, and co-sponsored the 10th Annual Legislative Conference in March. The Conference is attended by over 600 women who participated in a day-long series of workshops and caucuses. The Commission presented the workshop on E.R.A. implementation in 1978, since the 26 bill package had just been introduced.

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Commission's information and education function is carried out through periodical newsletters, other publications, speaking engagements, and radio and television appearances under the direction of Nancy Kymn Harvin, Director of Information and Education.

In 1978, the periodical WOMENEWS reached nearly 6,000 individuals, groups, libraries, and schools with news of Commission activities, women's issues and events, and legislative developments. Twenty-eight news releases, each directed to a specific issue or activity, were issued in 1978. Public service announcements were prepared for radio and television announcements to inform women about such issues as opportunities for women in nontraditional jobs, credit rights, and the Consumer Energy Counselor program. The speaker's bureau filled requests for speakers, panelists, workshop leaders, and other participants at conferences and meetings throughout Pennsylvania.

Employment Discrimination: How Do You Know When It's Happening To You? was issued as the Commission's fourth resource guide. The brochure presents a checklist of possibly discriminatory actions and can be used by an employee or potential employee to determine whether she should consider filing a discrimination complaint. Adapted from material originally prepared by the Boston Municipal Women's Project, the booklet covers equal pay, job opportunities, advancement and training, and employee benefits.

The Information and Education Director also provided editorial and production guidance for two other publications, the Report of the Task Force on Vocational Education and Apprenticeship Training, and the Final Report of the E.R.A. Implementation Project.

The Commission's first film, "Why Not A Woman?" produced in 1977, was distributed through the state library and school library systems as well as by the Commission office. It was shown over 700 times in 1978.

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION HEARING ON DIRECTORY LISTINGS

The Commission's Director testified on the issue of directory listings in the P.U.C.'s hearings brought about by a petition of Pennsylvania NOW to require that the telephone company provide two individual listings per household for telephone subscribers.

Commission testimony pointed out that married women could rarely be found in the telephone directory, causing an inconvenience to both business and residential subscribers. Testimony also pointed out that the Bell of Pennsylvania's request for a substantial new fee for second listings was arbitrary

and discriminatory, since listings of more than one line (such as Keeney, John R. TSgt Ret) and listings which apparently represented more than one individual (such as Jones, Donna Wayne) could be found in current directories. Testimony also presented a new experimental directory being used in Joplin, Missouri as an example of multiple listings in a convenient format.

The P.U.C. ruled in October that Bell of Pennsylvania should make available a second separate line listing for current subscribers for a one-time charge of \$2.50 and for all new subscribers at no additional charge.

SEX DISCRIMINATION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

During 1978, the Commission became increasingly concerned about reports that state and federal regulations regarding equal opportunity for girls in high school interscholastic athletic programs were not being adequately enforced. In addition to complaints received by the office, the Commission made informal inquiries among parents of high school girls who participated in sports programs, and learned of widespread inequities from nearly every parent questioned.

In accordance with its mandate to investigate areas of discrimination, the Commission held two days of hearings on girls' opportunities in high school sports in November. Data prepared by the Commission for these hearings revealed that, although the numbers of girls participating in sports has increased dramatically since legal protections were instituted, the number of sports offered in various schools and other factors did not portray full equality of opportunity by the July 1978 deadline for compliance with federal law. The 21 parents, teachers, coaches, union officials, game officials, state agency representatives, and students who testified presented hard data on the lack of equal opportunity in such areas as access to game fields and facilities, adequate funding of the sport, comparable coaching and officiating salaries, and general school recognition and attitudes toward male and female athletes.

A report and recommendations based on these hearings is scheduled for release in 1979.

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS

A 1977 Task Force finding that women were underrepresented in training programs funded by the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act led to a Commission demonstration project geared to the training and job preparation of economically disadvantaged women, particularly displaced homemakers.

The Consumer Energy Conservation Counselor Program was initiated under the direction of Bonnie Alexander, Project Director and Belinda Cooper, Project Assistant. During 1978, 23 low income, unemployed or underemployed

women went through the program which consisted of 4 weeks of classroom training and 20 weeks of actual job experience. The classroom training taught household energy conservation methods and techniques, as well as public speaking, time scheduling, job preparation, and resume writing. Participants then spent five months conducting home visits and group demonstrations throughout Dauphin County showing homemakers how to save energy and money.

The project was designed to show that an employment and training program under CETA could take women whose only skills were in homemaking, and provide them with training, job seeking skills, and actual work experience leading to a wide range of paid employment. The project fully realized this goal, with a record 52 percent placement rate of program participants in unsubsidized, private sector jobs. Based on its first year success, the project was awarded a continuation grant in late 1978, and in 1979 will both train participants and work with CETA programs around the state to develop additional training and employment programs for women.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

The Task Force on Vocational Education and Apprenticeship Training released a report in 1978 detailing the opportunities and barriers to girls and women in these two critical areas of job and career preparation.

The Task Force, established by the Commission in 1977, examined both the vocational education system and the apprenticeship system in order to determine where sex discrimination, sex role stereotyping, and sexism were still operating to limit the numbers of girls and women participating in areas that are not traditionally female courses and programs. The Task Force report contains a description of how both of these systems operate, including regulations and funding by various local, state, and federal agencies, admission procedures and requirements, and data by sex on levels of participation. The report includes recommendations regarding each of these training systems.

Major recommendations of the Task Force include:

- increasing the number of women in decision-making positions in vocational and apprenticeship training programs.
- allocating state funds to implement programs that decrease sex bias.
- training of counselors and teachers in sex bias, affirmative action, nontraditional employment for women, etc.
- establishing priorities by the State Department of Education for activities in the Five-Year and Annual Plans to eliminate sex bias.

The Task Force was headed by Dr. Norma Raffel. Members included staff of the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and Industry, Pennsylvania State University, U.S. Department of Labor, and representatives of women's groups.

COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

Just by its title, the Commission for Women is seen by many as the agency to hear complaints of sex discrimination on the job, in school, and in a wide variety of other areas. Statutory authority for resolving sex discrimination complaints actually rests with several other state and federal agencies, while the Commission itself has no enforcement or investigatory powers. But the Commission does perform an information and referral function, and attempts to use its listening post for individual complaints as one means of gauging the public need for wide distribution of information materials and for specific projects addressing women's concerns.

Complaints and inquiries are translated into resource guides, subjects for issues of the Woman's Report, articles in WOMENEWS, proposals for funding of special demonstration projects, or development of films and other informational materials, spot announcements for commercial television, subjects for radio and television public service programs, conferences, workshops and speeches, and legislative reform initiatives.

Following is a chart showing the major areas of complaint and request for information handled by the Commission for Women in 1978. Substantially all complaints are handled by the Commission's Administrative Officer/Complaint Specialist, Evelyn Frantz. Requests for information and materials are handled by Alice Anderson, the Commission's Secretary/Receptionist, Evelyn Frantz, and Rose Singer, a retired senior volunteer who has been with the office for three and a half years.

COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

Complaints		Requests for Information	1978 Publications	Earlier Publications
Commission for Women	347	WOMENNEWS - 5 issues - 31,000 copies	Women's Credit Handbook	
Credit discrimination	38	369		
Displaced homemakers	16			
Divorce support	10	28		
Education discrimination	3			
Employment discrimination - general	47	623	How Do You Know When It's Happening To You? - 10,000	
Pregnancy/disability/ maternity leave	14	67	" " "	
ERA	252	Implementation Report	Impact of the ERA Since 1971	
Funding sources	83			
Health concerns	9			
Housing discrimination	5			
Insurance discrimination	1	11		
International Women's Year	36			
Job hunting	163		Women's Job Hunting Guide	
Maiden name rights	2	3	WOMENNEWS - 5 issues - 31,000 copies	
Rape	19			
Tax law	5			
Wife abuse	1	26		
Women in nontraditional jobs			Why Not A Woman (film and fact book)	
Women-in politics	3			
Women's rights/general	49	WOMENNEWS - 5 issues - 31,000 copies		
Vocational education/apprenticeship		Voc Ed/Apprenticeship Report		
All other	16	44		
	129	2,088		

